United Nations A/66/849–S/2012/477

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
21 June 2012
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda item 36
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Identical letters dated 13 June 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit herewith the Baabda Declaration issued by the National Committee of Dialogue at Baabda Palace on 11 June 2012 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 36, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Caroline **Ziade**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

12-38540 (E) 260612 270612

Please recycle

Annex to the identical letters dated 13 June 2012 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Baabda Declaration issued by the National Dialogue Committee on 11 June 2012

At the invitation of the President of the Republic of Lebanon, Michel Sleiman, the National Dialogue Committee met on Monday, 11 June 2012, at the residence of the President of the Republic in Baabda. The meeting was chaired by the President and attended by the dialogue teams. Mr. Saad Hariri and Mr. Samir Geagea were absent. The minister Muhammad al-Safadi was absent owing to illness.

A minute's silence was held in honour of the late Ghassan Tueni, a former member of the Committee. The President of the Republic then opened the session, highlighting the pressing circumstances that had led him to invite the Committee to resume its work. Tragic events had unfolded, particularly in the north of the country, bringing negative economic and social repercussions at a time when Lebanon was preparing for the summer holiday season and the visit of His Holiness the Pope in September 2012. The Lebanese people must safeguard their country as a symbol of freedom, coexistence and dialogue.

The President recalled the positive aspects of the Committee's work in the previous sessions, particularly in accompanying the achievements of the previous four years in a calm and democratic environment. He then outlined the considerations that had led it to suspend its work, stressing that the Committee must overcome the obstacles to the implementation of its previous resolutions and work in a stable and systematic manner in order fully to realize its objectives for the nation.

In that context, he drew attention to recent events and domestic, regional and international developments that had taken place since the suspension of the Committee's work.

A general discussion ensued concerning the agenda items proposed by the President. The Committee heard the views and positions of the dialogue teams regarding various urgent topics requiring immediate attention and response.

The discussions resulted in consensus on the following points and decisions:

1. The path of dialogue should be adopted, and security, political and media issues should be approached in a spirit of serenity. The focus should be on commonalities and consensus on fixed points.

2. Parties should commit to laying the foundations of stability; safeguarding public order; preventing violence and the country's descent into strife; and intensifying the search for the political means to secure those objectives.

3. Citizens of all allegiances should be urged to cherish the conviction that any resort to weapons and violence, whatever the fears and tensions, is inevitably a blow and a loss for all parties; it endangers the people's livelihoods, their future and the future of the next generations.

4. Action should be taken to strengthen State institutions, encourage a culture of reliance on the law and legitimate institutions for the resolution of any contention or urgent issue.

5. Because the Army upholds civil peace and embodies national unity, it deserves moral and material support. Efforts should be made to enable it and the other legitimate security forces to respond to urgent security situations according to a deployment plan aimed at imposing State authority, security and stability.

6. The judicial power also deserved support in imposing the law with justice and without discrimination.

7. The implementation of a socioeconomic development plan throughout Lebanon should be encouraged.

8. All political forces and intellectuals and opinion leaders should be encouraged to avoid inflammatory political and media discourse and anything that could spark conflict, disturbances, sectarian confessional strife. That approach would consolidate national unity and promote internal cohesion in confronting external threats, particularly that posed by the Israeli enemy. Such action would have positive implications for public opinion, the economy, tourism and the social situation.

9. It is important to reaffirm the need to comply with the code of honour previously formulated by the National Dialogue Committee with a view to ensuring restraint in political and media discourse, contributing to the creation of a serene environment and making Lebanon a centre for the dialogue of civilizations, religions and cultures.

10. Trust in coexistence and in Lebanon as the unequivocal homeland should be reaffirmed, as should the need to comply with the principles contained in the Preamble to the Constitution, which are fixed founding principles.

11. The Taif accords must be respected, and parties must continue to implement all of its provisions.

12. Lebanon should eschew block politics and regional and international conflicts. It should seek to avoid the negative repercussions of regional tensions and crises in order to preserve its own paramount interest, national unity and civil peace, except where the matter concerns resolutions of international legitimacy, Arab consensus or the rightful Palestinian cause, including the right of Palestinian refugees return to their land and homes rather than being integrated.

13. Measures should then be taken to control the situation on the Lebanese-Syrian border. The establishment of a buffer zone in Lebanon should not be permitted. The country cannot be used as a base, corridor or starting point to smuggle weapons and combatants. At the same time, the right to humanitarian solidarity and political and media expression is guaranteed under the Constitution and the law.

14. International resolutions, including Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), should be respected.

15. It is important to continue examining ways to put in place strategies to implement the resolutions agreed by the National Dialogue Committee.

16. The next session of the Committee will take place on Monday, 25 June 2012 at 11 a.m. The Committee will resume consideration of its agenda, particularly the national defence strategy.

17. This statement shall be termed "the Baabda Declaration" and shall be respected by all parties. Copies shall be transmitted to the League of Arab States and the United Nations.